



Town of Rowe
Board of Selectmen Minutes
Thursday, November 12, 2020 –5:00 p.m.
VIA TELECONFERENCE

Meetings normally held at the Municipal Offices are being held remotely, with adequate, alternative means of public access and, where required, public participation provided, in accordance with the Governor's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. c.30A § 20.

Board of Selectmen: Chair Charles Sokol, Selectman Ed Silva, Vice-Chair Joanne Semanie
Staff: Janice Boudreau, Executive Secretary, Paul McLatchy III, Administrative Assistant to the Boards
Audience: Jade Schnauber, Emily Bos, Alain Peteroy

Call to Order: Chair Sokol called the meeting to order at 5:00 P.M.

Roll Call Vote: Chair Sokol- yes Ed Silva- yes Vice-Chair Semanie- yes (Vote: 3-0-0)

Announcement of recording devices: one
Noteworthy Announcements (as needed): None

Appointments:

5:00 -5:15 p.m. Jade Schnauber – Workforce Programs Manager re: Mohawk Trail Woodland Partnership (MTWP) member town Entrepreneur Challenge: Jade presented information about the MTWP challenge to apply for a \$25,000 grant to help launch a business in woodland related business to create jobs in the MTWP towns. The MTWP would be assessing applicants from January to March 2021. It was agreed to put notices in the Goal Post and on the Town Website.

Jade Schnauber left the meeting at 5:08 p.m.

5:15- 5:30 p.m. – Emily Boss – Franklin Land Trust – Update on Warner Hill Wildlife Corridor project: Emily Boss, Land Protection Specialist came to update the current project to conserve 800 acres working with 6 property owners from Charlemont and Rowe. The grant project includes creating a trail that has some land in Rowe. The issue has come up about the properties having passed rights to mining minerals back in history and there has been difficulty locating the people who inherited these rights. Ms. Boss confirmed the property owners would be liable for claims and not the town. Chair Sokol said the Board is supportive of the project going forward and to conserve land but not be a burden to the town. It was decided to continue to find the heirs to the mining rights and will report back with progress soon.

Emily Boss left the meeting at 5:23 p.m.

Minutes:

1. Minutes of October 27, 2020- Covid Group:
2. Minutes of November 3, 2020- Covid Group:

MOTION TO APPROVE: Chair Sokol made a motion to approve the Minutes of Covid Group meetings of October 27, 2020 and November 3, 2020. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chair Semanie.

Roll Call Vote: Chair Sokol- yes Vice-Chair Semanie- yes (Vote: 2-0-1)
Ed Silva- abstained from the vote.

3. Minutes of October 29, 2020:

MOTION TO APPROVE: Chair Sokol made a motion to approve the Minutes of October 29, as amended. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chair Selectman Silva.

Roll Call Vote: Chair Sokol- yes Ed Silva- yes Vice-Chair Semanie- yes
(Vote: 3-0-0)

Selectboard Business:

New Business:

1. Accountant Recommendation re: Audit: Executive Secretary said that Town Accountant David Fierro spoke with Auditor Tom Scanlon of Scanlon & Associates who were scheduled to perform an audit of FY19 and we have set aside \$16,000.00 for the purpose. Due to the unresolved problems with the Treasurer's accounts not having been reconciled since October 2019, David Fierro spoke with Scanlon, and sent him some materials. Scanlon recommended that, rather than conducting an audit for FY19 he felt the town would be better served to have a cash audit of FY20 to get the books in balance. This was assuming that Rowe did not need an audit to meet a bond or grant requirement. It would then establish procedures for moving forward. Following the audit, he would recommend when to next have an audit. Following discussion, it was agreed to move forward with the cash audit and Executive Secretary would contact Scanlon to prepare an agreement for next meeting.
2. Special Municipal Employee Designation Review: Town Clerk presented information received from Town Counsel regarding the Special Municipal Employee Designation for employees. Mr. McLatchy III had questions following a conflict of interest complaint filed against him stating he held too many positions in town. As a result, he was in contact with Town Counsel for clarification. Counsel recommended Selectmen declare the Town Clerk a Special Municipal Employee to give greater flexibility in serving multiple positions. The town in the past had designated some positions as Special Municipal Employee. McLatchy III presented a list of positions that could be designated as Special Municipal Employee to have it in place and, in the future, if an employee held multiple positions, the Conflict of Interest Disclosure could be filed. Selectmen reviewed the list Town Clerk presented for Special Municipal Employee designation to have it in place so there is no question for the future.

MOTION TO DESIGNATE SPECIAL MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES: Chair Sokol made a motion to designate the following as Special Municipal Employees:

Fire Department

Fire Chief
Fire Fighters/First Responders
Emergency Management Director
Assistant EMD

Police Department

Police Officers

DPW

On-call driver
Grasshoppers Supervisor, Asst. Supervisors, and Crew

Administration

Tax Collector (but not if combined with treasurer)
Town Accountant (any increase in hours might make it ineligible)
Goal Post Editor

Assessors

Assistant Assessor

Health

Board of Health Clerk
Transfer Station Attendants

Library

Library Assistants
Library Custodian

Park

Assistant Rangers (Summer Youth)
Rec Program Director, Asst. Director, Workers
Sports Camp Counselors
Fitness Room Attendant/Monitor/Instructor

Town Clerk:

Registrars of Voters
Election Warden, Election Clerk, and Tellers
Assistant Town Clerk

Municipal Light Plant:

Municipal Light Plant Manager
Municipal Light Plant Deputy Manager

Other:

Animal Control Officer & Relief
Animal Inspector

Elected Officials:

Constable (Elected)
Moderator
Town Clerk

Elected Committees:

Board of Assessors
Board of Health
Board of Selectmen
Cemetery Commission
Finance Committee
Library Trustees
Park Commission
Planning Board
School Committee

Appointed Officials:

Assistant Treasurer (*if ever split from the AATTB*)
Regional Organization Representatives (FRCOG Council, FRTA Advisory Board, etc.)
Fence Viewer

Field Driver
Forest Fire Warden
Inspectors (Building, Electrical, etc.)
Keeper of the Dams & Alternate
Measurer of Wood, Bark, and Lumber
Superintendent of Pest/Elm Disease Control
Tree Warden
Veterans Burial Agent
Constable (Appointed)
Pound Keeper
Veterans Representative
Community Emergency Response Coordinator
HazMat Control Officer
Environmental Officer

Appointed Committees:

Bylaw Review Committee
Council on Aging
Gracy House Committee
Beautification Committee
Old Home Day Committee
Energy Committee
Conservation Commission
Historical Commission
Agricultural Commission
Cultural Council
Zoning Board of Appeals

Vice-Chair Semanie seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote: Chair Sokol- yes Ed Silva- yes Vice-Chair Semanie- yes
(Vote: 3-0-0)

Old Business:

1. Town Operations and Covid Safety Measures: Chair Sokol said that the 'Continuity of Operations Plan' was discussed at the recent Board of Selectmen meeting and following discussion it was agreed that each dept. should review their operations and think about the following situations and what plans to have in place:

- a) If you or a person in your dept. is out for a short period of time
- b) If you or a person in your dept. is out for an indefinite period of time
- c) If everyone in your dept. is out for a period of time
- d) If your facility is out for a short period of time
- e) If your facility is out for a long-term period of time

Following review, Chair Sokol asked that Executive Secretary contact depts. and have them file an outline of plans by the next meeting on Monday, November 23rd. It will get each dept. to start to think about it and work on details for the Board to review and discuss further and could be added to the Emergency Management Plan for the town.

2. Retirees Insurance Sign on Policies: Administrative Assistant worked on questions for discussion and clarification to be added to Personnel Policy Manual. Following discussion, it was decided to formalize the policies and present at next meeting for final approval.

3. Comp Time Follow Up Discussion: Selectmen discussed comp time for the highway superintendent, and Selectmen Silva felt there were some Rowe employees were receiving compensation much higher than comparable towns and it should be looked into. Executive Secretary said she was researching how best to perform the wage and salary survey for Rowe and had reached out to Bob Dean, Director of Regional Services for FRCOG who had some suggestions and would continue to pursue.

Contracts/Warrants:

1. Warrant Review: Review Warrants FY21 W010 and FY21 PW10: Vice-Chair Semanie said she would review on Friday.
2. Donation and License Agreement ("Burn House" Training): The final agreement with amendments for the house donation for the Fire Dept. to conduct training was reviewed. Fire Chief asked that the completion date be changed to June 30, 2020.

MOTION TO SIGN AGREEMENT: Following review, Chair Sokol made a motion to sign and accept the 'Donation and License Agreement', by and between the Town of Rowe, the Town of Rowe Fire Department and Susan A. Williams, Trustee of the Middletown Hill Trust for the structure on 7 Middletown Hill Road in Rowe, Massachusetts for the purpose of conducting a live fire training for the Fire Department. The motion was seconded by Selectman Silva.

Roll Call Vote: Chair Sokol- yes Ed Silva- yes Vice-Chair Semanie- yes
(Vote: 3-0-0)

Administrative Office Updates:

- Selectmen reviewed the Executive Secretary Updates and Administrative Assistant updates that were presented.
- Administrative Assistant Paul McLatchy III noted that he had resigned from the Planning Board, effective immediately.

Unforeseen Business (within preceding 48 hours): None

Future Meeting(s):

Chair Sokol said the next meeting would be on Monday, November 23, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. Discussion to include: 'Town Procedures Responding to Covid-19', Insurance Policies regarding retirees, road signs report, and comp time follow-up.

Adjournment:

MOTION TO ADJOURN: Chair Sokol made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:44 p.m. The motion was seconded by Selectman Silva.

Roll Call Vote: Chair Sokol- yes Ed Silva- yes Vice-Chair Semanie- yes
(Vote: 3-0-0)

Respectfully Submitted,

Janice Boudreau, Executive Secretary

Approval Date: Monday, November 23, 2020

Approved:



Chuck Sokol, Chair

Ed Silva, Selectman



Joanne Semanie, Vice-Chair

Documents:

1. Agenda November 12, 2020
2. Mohawk Trail Region Entrepreneurs Challenge for MTWP member towns
3. Minutes of October 27, 2020- Covid Group
4. Minutes of October 29, 2020
5. Minutes of November 3, 2020 – Covid Group
6. Donation and License Agreement – (“Burn House”)
7. Draft Personnel Policy Manual Policies re: Insurance
8. Administrative Assistant Updates
9. Town Counsel re: Special Municipal Employee
10. Special Municipal Employees Designation
11. Special Municipal Employee Disclosure
12. Executive Secretary Updates

Mail:

1. McLatchy III Letter of resignation to Planning Board